



MEMORANDUM

TO: ALL DIVISIONS
Executive Branch

FROM: 
Sherrick S. Roanhorse, Chief of Staff
Office of President and Vice President

SUBJECT: General Information for Operation Breathe Safe for Administration Building #1

DATE: September 16, 2011

For Your information, President Ben Shelly issued the Administrative Order for "Operation Breathe Safe" and has appointed the Navajo Nation Incident Management Team (IMT) to address the issues within Administration Building #1. Both Executive Branch Divisions and the IMT will work together to protect the health and safety of employees.

Last week, the Navajo Occupational Safety and Health Administration Program (NOSHA) and Facilities Maintenance Department issued a notice of closure due to preliminary reports of mold in the Administration Building #1. Currently, all of the programs in that building are temporarily housed in various locations, including the Department of Dine Education Auditorium, Administration Building #2, Department of Information Technology Building, Navajo Nation Museum, and Training Center Building. To get more facts and details, a professional contractor was hired to sample from Administration Building #1. Once laboratory results are fully analyzed, the contractor will then provide a more detailed analysis of the problem and provide recommendations to the IMT on how to remediate the building.

Further, a second contractor was hired to specifically assist the IMT retrieving vital documents, which began today. During this process, operations chief Wilson Laughter will oversee this activity and provide limited entry to certain individuals. To better coordinate, each division, department and/or program director was asked to provide a short priority list of items needing retrieval. NOSHA staff will provide training onsite to individuals charged with retrieving materials and will assist the contractors. Once materials are retrieved, the items will then be brought through a decontamination room setup before exiting the building. The perimeter around the building will be restricted during this operation.

The next steps identified by the IMT are to review the report by the environmental consultant and prepare a plan of action for remediation and/or structural repairs of the building. The IMT's goal is to address the issues surrounding Administration Building #1. Depending on the magnitude of the work load necessary to fully remediate the building, it may take a few weeks before employees

return to their workplace in Administration Building #1.

Employees of Administration Building #1 are encouraged to see a physician if they feel they may have been exposed to the contamination and are advised to not enter Administration Building #1 due to possible exposure. The Division of Health, Office of Environmental Health, and the Indian Health Service will be coordinating employee screening and health education. Furthermore, employee benefits and workman's compensation programs will also be made available to provide intake services to Administration Building #1 staff.

We thank you for your understanding and patience. Your role is important and necessary to maintain essential operations of the Navajo Nation Government. We ask all branches to provide in-kind services, supplies, and more importantly, provide assistance and support to colleagues that are temporarily displaced from their workplace.

Lastly, all phone numbers are the same and have been transferred to their temporary office site. For updated information, please visit the Navajo Nation Government Website at <http://www.navajonnsn.gov>.

We thank you for your assistance and patience in during this time. If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our office at (928) 871-7000.

cc: Ben Shelly, President, The Navajo Nation
Rex Lee Jim, Vice President, The Navajo Nation
Johhny Naize, Speaker, Navajo Nation Council
Herb Yazzie, Chief Justice, Judicial Branch
Michele Morris
Laphillda Tso